The Grand Point of SOLICITUDE.

A very brief ESSAY
UPON
Divine **Deſertions**;
THE
SYMPTOMS of them,
AND
The METHODS of
Preventing them.

A SERMON Publiſhed for the Service of Others, by One of the Hearers, more particularly affected in the Hearing of it.

Tentatio Deſertiones eſt Omnium graviſſima.
Alſted.

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Deſertions Conſidered.

BOSTON 8. d. III m. 1715.

PSAL. CXIX. 8.

O Forſake me not Utterly.

A Prayer of the Greateſt *Importance!* A Prayer that ſhould be made with the Greateſt *Importunity.* The Breathings of a Regenerate and a Sanctified Soul, are admirably Expreſſed in the *Pſalm*, where this Prayer is met withal. The Deſires of the *New Creature*, the Affections and the Experiments of a *Soul Renewed* by the Holy Spirit of God fill the Pſalm. Such a Soul will more deeply Penetrate into the Meaning of the Pſalm,

than the most able Writer of any *Commentaries*, whom that Holy Spirit has not Illuminated. I say but what *Luther* spoke long ago: *Si quis Exercitatus in hac re fuerit, plura per se Inventurus est, quam Omnes Omnium Commentarii tribuere possint.* Unto such a Soul will be very sensible the Meaning of this Petition; *Forsake me not Utterly.* A Soul turned & fixed for that Resolution, *I will Keep thy Statutes, O Lord;* will have dreadful Apprehensions of that Confusion, A being *Utterly Forsaken by the Lord.* But it is here withal implied, That this *Resolution* is the way to prevent the Confusion. As we cannot *Keep the Statutes* of God, if He *Utterly forsake* us; Thus, if we will *Keep the Statutes* of God, it is a Sign that He will not *Utterly forsake* us. *Utterly*, it may be rendred, *Very much.* And my Doctrine shall make use of this Term, as well as the other. For indeed, I will not suppose it, no, I may not suppose it, of any among the dear People, whom I bring my

Doctrine

octrine to, That they are *Utterly* *rſaken* of God.

It is a dreadful Thing to be Utterly, or Very much Forſaken of God.

There are Two Accounts on hich it may be ſaid of a Man, That e is *Forſaken* of God. The One is, When a Man is Left under unre-ieved *Adverſity*. The other is, When Man is left unto unrelenting *Ini-uity*. Either caſe, is a Dreadful caſe. We ſhall ſpeak a little to both. But, Oh! Let every One Hear as we ſpeak, with a Soul full of the Depre-cation, O *Forſake me not Utterly*.

I. It is a dreadful Thing, to be *Very much Forſaken* of God, in being eft under *Adverſity*, which is too hard, for the Man that Suffers it. People are after ſome ſort *Forſaken* f God, when grievous *Calamity* reaks in upon them. The Bleſſed God ſaid, Hoſ. IX. 12. *Wo to them, when I depart from them.* When Peo-

ple

ple fall into *Woful* circumſtances, 'tis becauſe God has *departed* from them; God has *with-drawn* the Defence of His Providence about them. And yet, O Afflicted Ones, We will not count you *very much Forſaken* of God, while you are ſo ſupported of God, that He enables you to bear your Affliction. We read of ſome, 2 Cor. IV. 9. *Purſued, but not Forſaken*, Truly, *Not Forſaken*! while God fulfils to you that Word; *He will not ſuffer you to be Tempted beyond what you are able. Not Forſaken!* While God fulfils to you that Word, *I am with thee, I am thy God, I will Strengthen thee, I will Uphold thee.* But then, People are *very much Forſaken* of God, when their Troubles are *too hard* for them; when their Spirits *do ſink* under their Troubles; When they *Faint* under His *Rebukes*. Poor People, God has *very much Forſaken* you, when it comes to that, Prov. XXIV. 10. *If thou faint in the Day of Adverſity.* When People have no Conſiderations and Conſolations to fortify them, under their Difficulties;

no *Cordials*, to render their Sorrows tolerable; no *Supports*, to confirm their Patience; but their Hearts indecently fail them under their Diſcouragements; they are then *very much Forſaken* of God.

And they are yet more ſo, when their Troubles *ly Long* upon them; and no Cryes to God prevail for the Removal of their Troubles. Thus the Pſalmiſt complains; Pſal. XXII. 1, 2. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? O my God, I cry, but thou heareſt not.* People are *very much Forſaken* of God, when they Languiſh under *ſore Plagues, and of Long Continuance*; when they make their Moans unto God for ſome Help, and He takes no notice of them; when it is with them in their Diſtreſſes according to that Word; *When ye ſpread forth your Hands, I will hide mine Eyes from you, yea, when you make many Prayers, I will not hear.* *Very much* does God *forſake* thoſe, to whom He gives occaſion to make that Lamentation! *How Long wilt thou*

thou forget me, O Lord; For ever!

You will not Expect, that I ſhould *Prove* this to be a *Dreadful Caſe*; Every one will readily own, That it is a *dreadful thing* to be thus *very much Forſaken* of God.

But it may be Expected, that I ſhould *Improve* it. And this will be done, in a Solemn Warning, That you all Beware of coming under the *Strange Puniſhment*, which is *reſerved for the Wicked* in another World. The *Puniſhment* of the Wicked in another *World*, ſhall be this; To be *Utterly Forſaken of God*. The Wicked Man when he *Sins*, *is Condemned of himſelf*. In the very Nature, and Language of his *own Sin*, he paſſes a *Condemnation* on himſelf. The Sin of a Wicked Man, is his *Forſaking of God*; His Condemnation is, To be *for ever Forſaken of God*. The Fate of the Wicked in another World, will be that; Jer. VII. 29. *The Lord hath Forſaken the Generation of His Wrath*. When God has paſs'd this Righteous and proper Doom upon Wicked

Ones,

nes, *Depart from me*; They ſhall
en be *Finally Forſaken* of Him.
nd being *Utterly Forſaken* of God,
ey are unavoidably caſt into *Utter*
rkneſs; they are ſent, where they
all *never ſee Light*. They are
rown into Unknown Miſeries.
nd God Leaves them for ever in
eir Miſerable Condition. God
ll now be *far from helping them*;
d *far from the Words of their roaring*.
l the Shrieks which the Damned
their Helliſh Anguiſh may ſend
to Heaven for Mercy, will be in-
ectual. If the Damned ſhould
xpoſtulate, *Why ſtandeſt thou afar*
O Lord? Why hideſt thou thy ſelf
theſe Endleſs Times of my Trouble?
od will have no Regard unto the
xpoſtulations. Oh! what a fear-
l Thing, to be thus utterly *Forſa-*
n of God! Wretched *Saul*, thought
mſelf unhappy enough, when the
rd was departed from him, and an
il Spirit came to trouble him.
ow horrid will be the unhappineſs
the Sinner, when the *Lord* ſhall

Utterly

Utterly Forsake him, and leave him in the hands of *Evil Spirits* to torture him! How much more Obdurate than *Cain* himself, is the Sinner that will not cry out, *Oh! Dreadful Punishment! I cannot bear such a Punishment!* But then, to avoid it, Get into good Terms with Heaven. Embrace and Address and Obey the Saviour who delivers from the *Wrath to come*. *Draw near* to God, and beg of your Saviour to give you Access unto Him. This must be done, that you may not be *Utterly Forsaken* of God.

II. It is a dreadful Thing, to be *very much Forsaken* of God, in being left unto *Iniquity*, wherein the Influences of His Grace have abandoned us. We are now preparing to Speak, the *Trumpets are preparing to Sound*, of the Saddest Thing that can be Spoken of; A more *dreadful Sound* has never struck the Ears of Mortal Men. To be so *forsaken* of God, as to ly helpless and hopeless under *Temporal* Sorrow, is a dreadful case.

But,

ut, verily, to be ſo *forſaken* of God, to be abandoned unto *Sin*, and left unto the horrid *Paths of the Deſtroyer*; this is a much more dreadful caſe. The Marks of the dreadful caſe, are now to be ſet before you.

Our Enquiry ſhall be; *What are the Marks of a Man very much forſaken of God?*

Firſt. A Man looks like one *very much Forſaken* of God, when the *Word* of God makes but little Impreſſion upon him. The Glorious God uſes to come in His *Word* unto the Minds of Men. When the *Word* of God comes unto Men, but *God* comes not in it; and Men do not hear, and feel *God* Speaking to them in it; the Men are *very much Forſaken* of God. A Man is not *forſaken* of God, when it may be ſaid unto him, as in 2 Chron. XXXIV. 27. *Thine Heart is tender, and thou humbleſt thy ſelf before God, when thou heareſt His Words.* While a Man is not *Forſaken* of God,

the *Word* of God has an Efficacy on him; He yields Obedience to the *Word* of God. The *Word* of God will reſtrain him, and reclaim him from the *Evil Way*. The *Word* of God will Encourage him in *Patient Continuance in Well-doing*. The *Word* of God will Terrify him from the *Unfruitful Works of Darkneſs*. O *Hearers of the Word*; If you are ſenſible, that the *Word* of God makes any Good Impreſſion upon you, then you may be aſſured, That you are not *Utterly Forſaken* of God. But then, there are thoſe, who are *Utterly deaf* to all the Thunder in the *Word* of God. Tho' the *Word* of God ſet before them the Nature and the Danger of that ungodly Life, wherein they continue *alienated from the Life of God*, yet they continue in it. Tho' the *Word* of God, brings them the *Call of the Goſpel*, which invites them to their Saviour, yet they ſleight the Call, and Keep at a Diſtance from their Saviour. The *Word* of God informs them of the

Evil

vil that Purſueth Sinners, and yet ney will remain Impenitent Sin-ers, and *go on ſtill in their Treſpaſſes.* They ſit under the *Word* of God, but ney are not moved with it; No ious *Affections* are Enkindled in nem; No Pious *Purpoſes* are produ-ed in them! All Applications from he *Word* of God are loſt upon nem. All Diſpenſations of the *Vord* upon them, are but Water pilt upon a Rock. Oh! how very nuch *Forſaken* of God, are theſe mpenetrable Souls! A Prophet of God ſaid unto one, who deſpiſed His *Word*; 2 Chron. XXV. 16. *know, that God has determined to eſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt not bear-ened unto my Counſel.* This, alas, This may be ſaid unto them, whom he Word of God will not work pon: *I know that God has very much orſaken thee*, becauſe thou haſt *not earkened* unto the Counſels of His *Vord*: Becauſe the Counſels, and Reproofs and Warnings of His *Word*, vill do nothing upon thee

Secondly. A Man looks like one *very much Forſaken* of God, when the moſt Awakening Occurrences of His *Providence*, are not regarded with him. A Man is not very much *Forſaken* of God, when he ſees God in what he meets withal, and minds the *Will of God* intimated unto him in it. God is *nigh* to Men, when they take much *Notice* of Him; when they *hear* what He ſayes in what He *does*; when they remember that they have to do with *Him*. He has not *very much forſaken* them, when they do what we read; Pſal. LXIV. 9. *They ſhall declare* (and ſo, Diſcern) *the work of God*; *For they ſhall wiſely conſider of His Doing*. But, Oh! the Deplorable ſtate of thoſe, who have no Eye to the Glorious *God*, in the Works of His *Providence*! *Lord, when thy Hand is lifted up, they will not ſee*. But it is plainly to be ſeen, that they are very much *Forſaken* of God. Of ſome we are told; Pſal. XXVIII. 5. *Becauſe they regard not the works of the Lord*,

rd, nor the operation of His Hands, ſhall deſtroy them. If People will *regard* the Admonitions, which e Lord gives unto them in His *ovidence*, it ſhows, that He has *very uch forſaken* them. Some are very uch *Proſpered*. God *ſpeaks to them t their Proſperity*. It has no Effect on them It fetches from them Hearty *Praiſes* of God. It puts em not upon any New *Projections* Glorify God. They never think, the *Talents* they are betruſted ith. *O man, who knoweſt not that e Goodneſs of God leads thee to Repen-nce*; Be this known to thee; Thou t a Man *very much forſaken* of God. ome undergo much *Affliction*. hey have been *Fools*; And *becauſe t their Tranſgreſſion, and becauſe of eir Iniquities, they are Afflicted*. But ey are nothing the better for it. hey are *Fools brayed in a Mortar*. heir *Folly* departs not from them. hey are as mad upon this World, s if they had meet with nothing to mbitter it unto them. They for-

ſake none of the Sins for which the
cannot but apprehend themſelv
Chaſtiſed of God. *All this Evil* com
upon them, yet they *make not* the
Prayer unto the Lord. The Ho
One may complain of them, *In va*
have I ſmitten them; They have receiv
no Correction. Tis Evident, They ar
very much Forſaken of Him, wh
ſmites them. Some ſee the Judg
ments of God upon *others*; but ar
not at all affected with what the
ſee. Their *Fleſh Trembles not for fe*
of a Righteous God; They are n
afraid of His Righteous *Judgments*
They venture upon dangerous Im
pieties; They do by their Impietie
expoſe themſelves to a ſhare in th
Judgments. There are thoſe wh
ſee *others Dying* about them daily, bu
they Live as if they themſelves were
never to Die. They ſee *others* taken
away by a *Sudden Death*; But the
do nothing to prepare for their ow
Death. O Stupid Souls; To dea
plainly with you; your ſtupidity
proclaims

proclaims, that you are *very much Forſaken* of God.

Thirdly. A Man looks like one *very much Forſaken* of God, when he has a Soul without *Inclinations of Piety* ſenſibly ſtirring in it. When a Man is not *very much Forſaken* of God, he has many Tendencies of Soul, towards the *Things that are Holy and Juſt and Good*; ſomething of God moving in his Heart; ſome Good Motions towards the Beſt Things. It is what we read; Pſal. XXVII. 8, 9. *My Heart ſaid, Thy Face, O Lord, I will ſeek. Leave me not, neither forſake me, O God of my Salvation.* So long as the Heart of a Man has any Diſpoſitions to *Seek the Face of God*, he may be ſure that God has not *left him, or forſaken him.* Yea, but there are ſome who are *forſaken* of all praiſe-worthy Diſpoſitions; And herein, Oh! how very much *forſaken of God!* There are thoſe who have a Soul altogether *Dead*, for thoſe things, wherein alone Men live

live unto God. And as they ſaid Joh. XI 21. *Lord, If thou hadſt been here, my Brother had not dyed.* So may it be ſaid, *Lord, If thou hadſt not forſaken theſe People they had not been ſo Dead for every thing that is Good.* Commend *Cloſet-Piety* to them; They have no Pleaſure in it. Commend *Houſhold-Piety* to them; They have no Lieſure for it. Of *Sabbatizing* on the Lords-Day, they ſay, *What a Wearineſs* is it? It ſhows, that God has very much *forſaken* them. If the *Sacrifices of Liberality* to Pious Uſes, are propounded unto them, they have a ſtrong Averſion for ſuch Things. They do all with a Grudge. *To what purpoſe all this waſte?* is their Cry. Why, God has *very much Forſaken* them. When Men have no *Convictions*, rowſing them to mind the Things of their Peace; no *Wiſhes* to grow Wiſer and Better; no *Reſolves* to Serve God and Do Good: What are theſe Men, but *very much Forſaken* of God?

Fourthly.

Fourthly. A Man looks like one *very much forſaken* of God, when he falls into *Courſes* or *Actions*, which bring wondrous *Ruines* or *Miſchiefs* upon him. If God be *with* a Man, he keeps the Man from undoing of himſelf. A Man is not *very much forſaken* of God, while a Gracious God ſays that unto him; Gen XX 6. *I witheld thee from ſinning againſt me.* But Oh! the *Sins*, Oh! the Sinful Extravagances and Exorbitances, which Men fall into, when they are *very much forſaken* of God. Men *very much forſaken* of God, will be *Wicked overmuch.* They will take ſuch Wayes, and they will do ſuch things, as they might eaſily foreſee would bring marvellous Damage upon them; No *Foreſight* can prevent it. *Satan* leads them Captive, ſince God has *very much Forſaken* them. Satan Befools them, Enſlaves them, does what he will with them. Great *Profeſſors* of Religion, do Scandalous, and Villanous, and Amazing

mazing things, when God has *very much Forſaken* them. Their *Scandals* aſtoniſh the World, make all Sober Ears to tingle at them. If a *David* be *very much Forſaken* of God, there comes a *Matter of Urijah*; and as we read; 2 Sam. XI. 27. *The Thing which David has done diſpleaſes the Lord.* Surely, Men could never be ſo Wicked, and ſo Fooliſh, and ſuch *Self-Deſtroyers*, and throw themſelves into the Things which *drown them in ſuch Perdition*, if they were not *very much Forſaken* of God.

Fifthly. A Man looks like one *very much Forſaken* of God, when he has *no Heart* for the Doing of thoſe Things which his *Welfare* very much turns upon. It was ſaid, 1 Chron. XXII. 16. *Ariſe, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.* Truly, when People *Ariſe*, and fall to *Doing* heartily and livelily, what they have to do towards their own Happineſs, it is an Indication that the Lord is *with* them. When God has *very much*

uch Forſaken Men, they are heart-
ſs and liſtleſs for all thoſe Things,
hich muſt be undertaken by thoſe
ho would not periſh wonderfully.
Man may ſee that he has the
rath of God lying upon him, and
at he is in utmoſt Hazard, of go-
g down into Devouring Fire, and
ternal Burnings, if he do not im-
ediately come into the *Covenant of*
race, for his Deliverance. And
et, if the Man be *very much Forſa-*
n of God, he will do nothing; he
ill remain as he is; he won't con-
nt unto ſo much as *One Article* in
e *Covenant of God*. A Man knows,
at if he don't immediately Re-
ounce the *Idols* and *Errors* of his
rmer Life; and put himſelf under
e Conduct of his only Saviour, he
in Hourly Hazard of being
rown into the *Place of Torments*.
nd yet the Man being *very much*
orſaken of God, he will *do Nothing*:
is Unrepenting and Unbelieving
oul, will not ſtir a Step. He lies
a Grave of Putrefaction, without

ſo

so much as a *Groan* for his Deliverance. A Man is told many things that would be vastly for his *Advantage*; But the *silly* Wretch has no *Heart* for those Things. The Advice of *Methods* to Befriend himself are to many a Man, a *Price in the Hand of a Fool*, that *has no Heart* unto it. O Man, Thou art *very much Forsaken* of God; else thou had never been left unto such *Inadvertency*.

But would you now have me labour in the *Proof* of it, that this is a *Dreadful Case*! What? That it is a *Dreadful Thing* to lye under the *Soreſt Vengeance* of God! I hope no one will queſtion this! What is rather to be laboured in, is the *Improvement* of ſuch a Truth.

Wherefore,

I. O you that are *very much Forſaken* of God, Be perſwaded with Agony to get out of this Condition; Be *perſwaded, knowing the Terror of the Lord*. It were much to be wiſhed

iſhed, that we may Examine our lves, *Have I upon me no Evident okens of one very much Forſaken of d?* Souls, If you find any ſuch kens upon you; O you, that are left in a Dark *Wilderneſs*, Be *afraid the Tokens*; Be afraid of what you ay be left unto. It is very ſure, hat all *Unregenerates* are *very much rſaken* of God. They that are *ithout God in the World*, cannot but be *ry much Forſaken* of God. But then, is alſo ſure, and very ſad, That erſons in their *Unregeneracy*, are not *ry much Perplexed* in themſelves, out their being *very much Forſa-n* of God. They have no Per-exity about it; no Griefs, no ears, no Cares, about their being *ry much Forſaken* of God. And ow, O *Forſaken Souls*; Is your Con-ition at all the leſs Dreadful, for our being ſo *Unaffected* with it; our having ſo little Dread of it. ow Forlorn was the Condition of mpſon; Judg. XVI. 20. *He was t aware that the Lord was departed*

from him. No better is your Condition, O Unregenerates, who are *not aware, that you are very much Forsaken of God.* How much more Eligible were it, for us to see Unconverted Ones in a Distressing Agony about their Condition! Oh! that we could see them Sick of a Condition, wherein they lye so *very much Forsaken* of God! We should gladly say upon it; *This is not a Sickness unto Death, but unto the Glory of God.* Souls you must not bear to persist in this Condition. *This Burden, I will forsake you, saith the Lord;* it must be the most Insupportable, the most Intolerable, Burden. You must cry out under it; *It is an heavy Burden, too heavy for me!* That you may get out of this Condition, you must *Return to God.* The Counsel proper for you, is that; Jam. VI. 8. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.* Oh! Bewail your *Forsaking* of God. Be unable to go on any further without *Communion* with God. Commit your selves into the Hands of

Him

Him who *ſeeks and ſaves that which is loſt*, that He may bring you back unto God; Then you ſhall no longer be ſo *very much Forſaken* of God: No longer be Termed *Forſaken*. Until you do this, you are in a Condition to be Trembled at. What is it, but the Foreboding of a *Damnation that ſlumbers not*? One may ſay, 'Tis an *Hell above-ground*, for a Man to be *very much Forſaken* of God. The Quinteſſence of *Damnation* lies in a being *Utterly Forſaken* of God. How much in the *Road* of it, are they, who make light of ſuch a Dereliction?

II. The *Children of God*, who may be in *ſome leſſer Degree Forſaken* of God, ſhould be uneaſy at it; ſhould with all Expedition get out of this Uneaſineſs. There are **Deſertions** to which the Children of God are liable; and they ſhould be Inſtructed how to carry it under them. Indeed, they ſometimes miſtake thoſe things for *Deſertions*, which are not

really so. *Children of God*, You may Enjoy *much of God*, when you imagine your selves to be *much Forsaken* of God. You may make thorough, and frightful, and humbling Discoveries of your own *Corruptions*; You may encounter with fierce *Temptations*; And yet not be *Forsaken* of God. But I will allow, that you may be under true *Desertions*. Tis possible, That God may Suspend those *Quickening Influences* on your Souls, wherewith He does often Actuate, Regulate, Corroborate, the Souls of the Faithful. Or else, God may withdraw from your Souls, the *Peaceful, Hopeful, Joyful Influences*, with which the Souls of the Faithful are sometimes Irradiated. Perhaps, you find, that tho' you come to the *Ordinances* of God, yet the Ordinances have *Little Force* upon you. You are not Enlightened, nor Enlivened, nor Refreshed, by what passes in the House of God, when you are waiting upon him there. You find, that when you set about the Exercises

of Devotion, you have no *Aſſiſtances* for thoſe Exerciſes. You make ſorry Work of it. Your Hearts are ſtraitned, and ſtragling, and you are like a Bird that has loſt its Wings. You may find, that when the *Devil* ſets upon you, you are not able to *Reſiſt him, ſtedfaſt in the Faith*; but are left unto your ſelves under this unhappineſs, *That the Lord helps you not againſt them that hate you.* You may find, That your *Conſcience* is wounded, and bleeding under Sins that have waſted it; and Horror takes hold of you; It is the *Hour and Power of Darkneſs* with you. It may be ſo, that your *Evidences for Heaven* are not clear. You can't ſee your Souls furniſhed with the *Things that accompany Salvation.* You are afraid your *Faith* is but Preſumption; and your *Obedience* is but Servile. At this Time the *Spirit of God Seals you not*, with any Comfortable, Powerful, Triumphant Perſwaſions, of your Heirſhip to the Kingdom of God; but leaves you in *Suſpenſe*

about your Title to Bleſſedneſs; not *Rejoycing with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*, but *Affrighted with Fear unſpeakable and full of Terror*. At the ſame Time, your *Cries* to Heaven are not anſwered, but when you *Cry and Shout, God ſhuts out your Prayers, and ſeems Angry at them*; until at laſt, with a Diſconſolate Soul, you *ſay in Haſte, Lord, I am cut off from before thine Eyes*, and, *Lord, I am caſt out of thy ſight*. Theſe are **Deſertions**.

And now *my Brethren*, If you are under ſuch *Deſertions*; tis time for this Cry to be heard; *Lord, Forſake me not utterly*. You muſt not now give way to *Deſperate Concluſions*; nor conclude your ſelves *utterly*, or Totally, or Finally Forſaken of God. No; Rather ſay with him; Pſal. XLIII. 5. *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul? Hope in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe Him*. And I will now tell you, what you ſhall do. Two Things you ſhall do. The *Firſt* Thing is this. If you perceive *God Forſaking*

you, do you Enquire, what you have done for *the Provoking of Him.* Don't forget that Word; Isa. LIX. 2. *Your Iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your Sins have hid His Face from you.* Christian, There may be some *Achan* in thy Heart or Life, that must be Stoned, before a *Door of Hope* can be set open for thee. The *Second* Thing is this; Let not *Gods Forsaking* of you, prevent *your Following* of Him. Act according to that Word; Isa. VIII. 17. *I will wait upon the Lord that hideth His Face, and look for Him.* Christian, Keep on thy Knees; Employ the most Earnest, and Constant Supplications; Do so, till the *Comforter* Visit thee and Relieve thee.

III. Can any People devise any Thing, about which all People have more cause to be Solicitous? Behold, The *Grand Point of Solicitude*, which we have all cause to insist upon. O *Lord, Forsake me not utterly!*

We

We are Solicitous, that our *Friends* may do well; and Eſpecially, that our *Children* may. Here is the Point of Solicitude. *O Lord, Forſake them not utterly. Oh! Leave them not unto themſelves! Oh! withhold not Thy Gracious Influences from them!*

And are we not Solicitous for *our ſelves*, that we may do well; that we may not be left unto the moſt unhappy of all Infelicities; that we may not be Tragical Inſtances of *Apoſtacies*, which may Proclaim that the Infinite God has *no Pleaſure* in us; but that we may firſt *Live Well*, and then *Dy Well*; not only Begin Well, but *Go on* Well and *Finiſh* Well; and be the Righteous that *Hold on their Way*! Behold, what we have to do! O our Dear People; Be always abounding in that Supplication; *Lord, Forſake me not utterly.*

This *Point of Solicitude* is in a peculiar manner to be commended unto *Aged People*; And moſt peculiarly unto them that have been Perſons of ſome Obſervation in the Profeſſion

eſſion of Religion, and perhaps in Teſtimonies for the Cauſe of Piety, nd have long had the Eyes of their Neighbours upon them. Sirs About what can you be more Solicitous han this? *Lord, Forſake me not utterly.* It was the pathetical Supplication; Pſal. LXXI. 18. *Now, when I am Old, and Gray-headed, O God, forſake me not.* Oh! It would be a dreadful Thing, if in our *Old Age*, we ſhould be left unto *any thing* that may Blemiſh our Profeſſion, *any thing* hat may render us a Ridicule to he Sons of Banter, *any thing*, that may cauſe our paſt Services to be forgotten, and our Lamp to go out n *Obſcure Darkneſs*. Wherefore, Let us with all proper Anxiety and Aſſiduity proſecute the Supplication; *When I am Old, O God, Forſake me not; Lord, Forſake me not utterly!* We ſee ſo many in their *Old Age* to do ſo very Fooliſhly, & that Sorrowful Word, *All his Righteouſneſs ſhall not be remembred*, fulfilled upon them; hat I Vehemently inculcate this

Point

Point of Solicitude upon you. T
not without Reason, that some
minent Believers, near their En
have made that Prayer, with a si
gular Anguish of Mind! *Oh! Do*
Thou now Forsake me, my God; Fo
shall Forsake Thee, if Thou do.

Now, that you may not be *Utte*
Forsaken of God, your Security w
be found in the *Everlasting Covenan*
which, Oh! that you would all h
mediately and Effectually co
into!

Remember this; That in the
verlasting Covenant, our Blessed J
SUS becomes Engaged, That *we sh*
not Forsake our God, and so it w
come to pass; That *our God w*
not utterly Forsake us. Thus we ha
our *Perseverance* forever secured; a
we *Stand in the Grace of God* for ev
and ever. The Voice of our Sou
must be; *O Great God, Be Thou n*
God. And, O Blessed JESUS, I Re
upon Thee to bring me near unto Go
and keep me near unto Him.

Yo

You may then depend upon the fulfilment of that Word; Heb. XIII. 5. *He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* For you may have a most comfortable Dependance on that Word also; Jer. XXII. 40. *I will put my Fear in their Hearts, and they shall not depart from me.*

Finally. Be Restless until you find your selves under the Power of this Disposition; O *Lord, I will keep thy Statutes.* A Soul Disposed that way, and heartily Desirous of that; may with a Glad Expectation of being heard, make this most Necessary Prayer; O *Forsake me not Utterly!*

FINIS.

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